



CENTRE COUNTY LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

Willowbank Office Building, 420 Holmes Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823-1488 Telephone (814) 355-6700 FAX (814) 355-6980



TABLE OF CONTENTS	
	Page
Language Access Plan	
Section 1: PURPOSE	3
Section 2: IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PERSONS AND COMMUNITIES	3
Section 3: PROVIDING LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES	4
Language Access Administrator	4
Language Access Services	4
Interpretation Services	5
Translation Services	5
Definitions	6
Training	6
Resources	7
Section 4: COMPLAINT PROCEDURES	8
Section 5: IMPLEMENTATION	9
Section 6: PLAN ADOPTION	10
Appendix A: Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Four Factor Analysis for Non-Court Related Offices	11

LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

Section 1: PURPOSE

Centre County Government, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, *Improving Access to Services for Person with Limited English Proficiency*, Act 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and/or other applicable statutes, is committed to providing **Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals** meaningful access to their programs and services.

Limited English Proficient Individuals are individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have limited ability to hear, read, speak, write, or understand English. These limited English proficient persons may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type or service, benefit, or encounter.

Primary Source: Limited English Proficiency (LEP) LEP.gov, a Federal Interagency Website

This Plan establishes guidelines and requirements for the provision of language access services. Copies of this plan are available upon request to the Language Access Administrator accessibility@centrecountypa.gov.

An individual involved with Centre County Court proceedings and actions must comply with the 49th Judicial District Language Access Policy, which is specific to the Centre County Court Offices. This policy is accessible via the internet at this location. <http://www.centrecountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3895>

Section 2: IDENTIFICATION and ASSESSMENT of LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PERSONS and COMMUNITIES

In order to effectively identify Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons, Centre County will compile US Census data on the number of LEP individuals in each of the County's municipalities. Additional data will be collected from County offices based on their contact with LEP individuals and communities.

LEP requirements will be reviewed for all County programs/grants to make certain that Centre County complies with requirements that may be specific to a program, a funding source or other.

As a recipient of federal funding, Centre County has an obligation to reduce language barriers to government services and provide meaningful access to LEP persons. Therefore, Centre County's assessment will also include conducting the Four Factor Analysis set forth in the US Department of Justice (DOJ) LEP Guidance that applies to the programs and activities of federal agencies, including the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – the lead federal agency for the County's Community Development Block Grant Program. The four factors are as follows:

- 1) The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or grantee/recipient;
- 2) The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program;
- 3) The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to the people's lives; and
- 4) The resources available to the grantee/recipient and costs.

US Census and County departmental data will be incorporated into the Four Factor Analysis process.

In an effort to make certain that programs and services provide for the appropriate level of language access, Centre County will reach out to the municipalities, businesses, organizations and appropriate persons where 5% of the population speaks English less than 'very well', as documented by the Four Factor Analysis, to determine the extent to which translation services are needed.

Example:

In the case of Miles and Penn Townships, it was documented through interviews and other contacts that the West Germanic speaking Amish population residing in these two municipalities do not need translation services when accessing programs and services provided for by Centre County Government. In the event that translation services are needed, Centre County will provide the service, if requested

Other prescribed analyses, as directed by the Language Access Administrator, may also be conducted and included in the assessment for Centre County Government.

All data will be reviewed when planning for the provision of language access services and for the purpose of tracking changes in the number of persons and spoken languages of LEP individuals.

At a minimum, assessments/analyses should be conducted prior to the update of the County's Language Access Policy, which is to occur within 5 years of plan adoption to meet the US Department of Housing and Urban Development requirements for the Centre County Community Development Block Grant Program.

If other populations of LEP persons are identified in the future, Centre County will provide additional measures to serve the language access needs of those persons. **Required for Federal Grants**

Section 3: PROVIDING LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES

a. Language Access Administrator

Under Section 3 of the Language Access Policy, the Centre County Board of Commissioners designated the Centre County Administrator or designee as the Language Access Administrator to oversee Centre County Government's provision of services for limited English proficient persons.

Contact information:

Centre County Administrator
420 Holmes Street
Bellefonte, PA 16823
(814) 355-6700
Email: accessibility@centrecountypa.gov

b. Language Assistance Services

In accordance with Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency" (August 11, 2000), Centre County Government has identified the types of language assistance for non-court related offices and services to be provided by Centre County dependent on need. (Note: Centre County Court of Common Pleas has an approved plan, *49th Judicial District Language Access Plan*)

Language services will be procured either on a countywide or departmental basis, if more specialized services are needed. These services, where necessary, will include the provision of American Sign Language.

Each County Office will utilize "I Speak" cards to help identify the language spoken by the LEP individual. Once the language is identified, the contracted language service provider will be contacted by telephone to provide interpretation services for the LEP individual.

Centre County's protocol for the provision of language services is as follows arranged by the type of services: Interpretation Services and/or Translation Services¹

i. **Interpretation Services – Oral Language Assistance**

NOTE: Underlined words are defined in Section C (below)

- Centre County does not require individuals who need language assistance to provide their own interpreters.
- Individuals who require interpreter services and who come in contact with County offices will be informed of the availability of free telephonic interpreting services.
- Staff will communicate with hearing-impaired and/or deaf residents in writing or provide American Sign Language services through a contractor, upon request.
- Anyone needing interpreter services is encouraged to utilize the services provided by Centre County Government in order to ensure quality interpretation.
- County-provided Interpreters:
 - When the individual requiring interpreter services is engaged in official business with the County, the County will provide an independent interpreter at all times and free of charge.
 - If an individual refuses to have a County-provided interpreter present when engaged in official business with the County, he or she must fill out a "Waiver of Interpreter Services". The waiver will only be valid for the date it is signed. A copy of the waiver is attached.
- Informal Interpreters: If an individual prefers to have their informal (friend or family member) interpreter present during conversation with County employees, contractors, interns, or volunteers, his or her interpreter may sit-in on the conversation unless there are compelling reasons to exclude them. Centre County generally will not permit children under the age of 18 to serve as informal interpreters.
- Interpreters will be available at public meetings upon at least 72 hours' notice to the County's Language Access Administrator or designee.

ii. **Translation Services – Written Language Assistance**

- Vital document translation will be on an as needed basis with translation completed in a timely manner.
- LEP individuals accessing Centre County's web pages will have the option to translate text by selecting his or her language in the Google Translate language menu on the County's Home Page.

¹ An **interpreter** is a person specially trained to convert oral messages from one language to another. A **translator** is a person specially trained to convert written text from one language to another. ... Thus, interpretation and **translation** are approached as "meaning for meaning" rather than "word for word."

Source: [Interpreters vs. Translators | Refugee Health TA](#)

- Any non-English language document that is received by the County or a County department will be forwarded in a timely manner to the County's contracted translation services for processing.
- Should a LEP identified population exist within a County municipality with a federally funded activity, the following conditions will be met:

1. All citizen participation notices will appear in English and the identified LEP language(s) documented in accordance with Section 2 above. **Required for Federal Grants**
2. All published public notices will include a statement in the identified LEP language(s) documented in accordance with Section 2 above indicating that other written materials will be made available in the LEP language(s) upon request. **Required for Federal Grants**
3. All public notices of income surveys and the income survey itself will be provided in the LEP language(s) documented in accordance with Section 2 above. **As Needed**

For income surveys in service areas meeting the threshold of LEP and/or direct assistance intakes, if needed, a translator will be retained to provide oral translation at the site of the income survey or intake to assist in filling out the survey/intake documents and explaining the program. Centre County may not require the LEP applicant to provide their own translator, though the applicant may bring someone if they choose. **As Needed**

4. All direct assistance program application documents and outreach materials will be provided in the LEP language(s) documented in accordance with Section 2 above. **As Needed**

c. Definitions

Conversation: Dissemination of information by a County employee, elected official, volunteer, or intern concerning program and/or departmental procedures and activities.

Independent Interpreter: A person working for a County-contracted service who is specially trained and certified to convert oral messages from one language to another.

Informal Interpreter: Friends and/or family members who facilitate communication between the LEP person and the service provider. Awareness of cultural differences is a positive factor in these communications; whereas, accuracy and reliability of interpretation may be a negative factor.

Official County Business: The submittal, recording or filing of applications, forms, plans, deeds, ____ to any County employee or with any County office.

d. Training

Centre County will train new and existing staff to ensure effective implementation of the Language Access Plan. Training will include, but is not limited to, an overview of the protocols established by this plan.

e. Resources

I SPEAK Language Identification Flashcard
2004 US Census Test
US Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration

www.lep.gov/ISpeakCards2004.pdf

GOOGLE TRANSLATE

<https://translate.google.com>

Google Translate is a free translation service that provides instant translations between dozens of different languages. It can translate words, sentences and web pages between any combination of supported languages.

Since the translations are generated by machines, not all translation will be perfect. The more human-translated documents that Google Translate can analyze in a specific language, the better the translation quality will be. This is why translation accuracy will sometimes vary across languages.

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

314 Boucke Building
University Park, PA 16802

(814) 863-3927

Email: gc-cc@psu.edu

<http://gc-cc.org>

A community non-profit organization affiliated with Penn State University, offers written, face-to-face, and telephone translation services for free.

OTHER

HUD's LEP website www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/promotingfh/lep.cfm

The site provides HUD program documents and translated materials in English and many other languages.

Federal LEP website: www.lep.gov

The Federal Limited English Proficiency website is a federal interagency website that offers numerous resources for LEP including translation and interpretation services.

POTENTIAL LANGUAGE SERVICE PROVIDERS

INTERPRETALK®

Language Services Associates

455 Business Center Drive

Suite 100

Horsham, PA 19044

Established in 1991, Language Services Associates provides language services solutions in over 200 languages. Our language solutions include [telephone interpreting](#), [translation and localization](#), [video remote interpreting](#), [face-to-face interpreting](#), [sign language interpreting](#) and [language assessments](#).

(800) 305-9673

www.lsaweb.com

INTERPRETEK

American Sign Language Interpreting Services

Northeast and Central Pennsylvania

240 Market Street, Suite 202

Bloomsburg, PA 17815

(570) 389-9999

Email: nepa.office@interpretek.com

LANGUAGELINE SOLUTIONS

U.S. Headquarters
1 Lower Ragsdale Drive
Building 2
Monterey CA, 93940

LanguageLine Solutions provides a range of language services including but not limited to over-the-phone and onsite interpreting, video remote interpreting, and document translation.

(800) 752-6096

Email: CustomerCare@LanguageLine.com

www.languageline.com

SIGN LANGUAGE SPECIALIST of WESTERN PA

172 Watson Street
Johnstown, PA 15905

(814) 659-5755

Email: slswpa@atlanticbb.net

VOIANCE LANGUAGE SERVICES, LLC

5780 N. Swan Rd
Tucson, AZ 85718

(520) 745-9447

Section 4: COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Because Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 "Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons" is an enforceable statute, the following complaint procedures have been developed:

In accordance with Centre County Government's Language Access Policy, any person, who has limited ability to hear, read, speak, write, or understand English and who believes that the County has not provided adequate language assistance, or any representative of such a person, is afforded the opportunity to file a complaint with the County.

Verbal communication with the County department head responsible for the objectionable program, service or facility is the first step in this process. Should verbal communication not be successful, a complaint may be filed in writing to the County Administrator or designee, using the Centre County Accessibility Complaint Form.

The Centre County Accessibility Complaint Policy provides for the timely, respectful and thorough review of a complaint upon receipt of a fully completed Centre County Accessibility Complaint Form. Directions for submittal of a written complaint are included on the Accessibility Complaint Form.

The form is available from all Centre County department heads following verbal communication and/or from the Language Access Administrator or designee at the following address:

Centre County Government
420 Holmes Street
Bellefonte, PA 16823
Email: accessibility@centrecountypa.gov
Phone: 814-355-6700

Language assistance will be available for the duration of the complaint process for any LEP person who wishes to file a complaint.

Section 5: IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation Process for the Centre County Language Access Plan for Non-Court Related Offices			
Task	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Reference Page
Identify and Assess Limited English Proficient Persons and Communities	Centre County Planning and Community Development Office	Within 5 years of LAP adoption, unless relevant data is released warranting an update to the Four-Factor Analysis	3
Procure Language Assistance Services	Language Access Administrator or Designee	Contract dependent and need based	4
Issue / Update / Re-issue "I Speak" Cards	Language Access Administrator or Designee	Upon Plan adoption and as needed	4
Meet language access needs for a federally funded activity	Grant Administrator	As needed and per funding requirements	6
Monitor Google Translate	Language Access Administrator or Designee	Periodic	5
Train staff	Language Access Administrator or Designee	Annual	6
Update Resources	Language Access Administrator or Designee	As part of the contract renewal process	6
Review Complaint Procedures	Language Access Administrator or Designee	Within 5 years of LAP adoption or as needed	8
Review Language Access Plan	Appropriate Staff	Annually	
Review Language Access Plan and Submit to BOC for Consideration and Re-adoption	Language Access Administrator or Designee and Appropriate Staff	Within 5 years of LAP adoption	4
Review Waiver Request Form	Language Access Administrator or Designee	Within 5 years of LAP adoption or as needed	

Section 6: PLAN ADOPTION

Centre County Language Access Plan

Adopted:

Nov. 19, 2019

Date:


Chief Elected Official Signature

MICHAEL PIPE
Printed Name of Chief Elected Official

ATTEST:

11.19.19
Date


County Administrator Signature

Margaret N. Gray
Printed Name of County Administrator